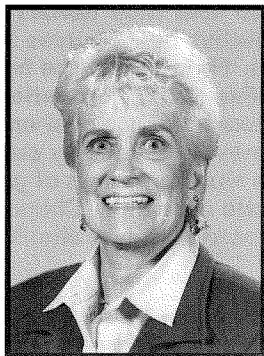


Hammerstrom's

for the people
in the 17th Senate District

Hotline



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October 17, 2005



MICHIGAN'S ASH TREES STILL UNDER ATTACK In 2002, the state's ash trees were attacked by the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and the Asian Longhorned Beetle, both of which are invasive, exotic species native to Asia. In response, the Michigan Department of Agriculture issued a quarantine on all ash trees and timber products in the affected counties to help prevent and control the spread of this pest. Currently, there are 20 counties in Southeast Michigan included in the quarantine, with other areas at risk. As of September 1, 2005, quarantine violators face harsher fines and penalties. Public Acts 51 through 54 of 2005 establish criminal penalties, increase fines, and give MDA the authority to issue tickets to those who ignore the quarantine. MDA will also continue its efforts to educate residents about EAB, other exotic pests and diseases, and quarantines. For more information about EAB, or to view a map of the quarantined areas, please visit www.michigan.gov/mda.

DID YOU KNOW? Since its detection in 2002, the Emerald Ash Borer has been responsible for the death or damage of approximately 15 million of Michigan's ash trees.

FALL COLORS TOUR FEATURED ONLINE Michigan residents are preparing to welcome all of the joys of fall, including the transformation of tree leaves from green to brilliant shades of red, yellow, and orange. For those who enjoy driving to various areas of the state to see the beautiful fall colors, Travel Michigan has suggested a number of fall-color tour routes for all parts of the state, some following major state highways, others meandering along secondary roads. Along every route, you'll find orchards and country markets, cider mills and wineries, autumn festivals, and even a few haunted houses. It's spectacular and it's all in Michigan. Traditionally, the fall color season begins in mid-September to early October in the Upper Peninsula and works its way south. From Mackinaw City to about the Mason/Lake/Osceola/Clare county line, colors change around late September to early October. South to the Ottawa/Kent/Ionia/Clinton county line, colors change early to mid-October. South to the Indiana/Michigan border, colors change mid-late October. For more information about the tours, please visit www.michigan.gov/travel. For a recorded color report, please call 1-800-442-2084, ext. 304.

USE ALTERNATIVE HEAT SOURCES SAFELY Michigan residents will once again begin to heat their homes and the Office of the State Fire Marshall wants to remind everyone to use caution when using alternative heat sources such as wood- and coal-burning stoves, kerosene heaters, gas space heaters, and electrical heaters. Fire risks in the home can be greatly reduced by following simple guidelines on the installation and use of these appliances. For operation, it is critical to use only fuels specified by the manufacturer as appropriate for the appliance. For example, use coal only if specifically approved by the stove manufacturer. Gasoline or other flammable liquids should never be used to start a wood fire because they could cause an explosion. Never use gasoline in kerosene heaters. Even small amounts of gasoline mixed with kerosene can increase the risk of fire. Regular maintenance is also critical for safe operation. Chimneys and vents should be inspected and cleaned annually by a professional chimney sweep and kerosene heaters should be cleaned and wicks replaced annually.

OCTOBER IS ARTS & HUMANITIES MONTH The Michigan Humanities Council and the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) have announced that October is Arts & Humanities Month. In recognizing the important role arts and humanities play in daily life, the councils have created an online cultural events calendar which highlights local activities and celebrations across Michigan. The calendar is featured at www.artsandhumanitiesmonth.com. Individuals who would like to have an October art, cultural, or humanities event listed on the calendar are encouraged to send details, including date, time, location, public contact information, and admission costs to shirko@mihumanities.org.

If you would like to receive future issues of Hammerstrom's Hotline via e-mail,
please contact me at SenBHammerstrom@senate.michigan.gov